



## Inventing Caribbean climates: How science, medicine, and tourism changed tropical weather from deadly to healthy

**Author(s):** Carey M  
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### Abstract:

This article examines how four major historical factors--geographical features, social conditions, medicine, and tourism--affected European and North American views of the tropical Caribbean climate from approximately 1750 to 1950. It focuses on the British West Indies, a region barely examined in the historiography of climate, and examines the views of physicians, residents, government officials, travelers, and missionaries. International perceptions of the tropical Caribbean climate shifted markedly over time, from the deadly, disease-ridden environment of colonial depictions in the eighteenth century to one of the world's most iconic climatic paradises, where tourists sought sun-drenched beaches and healing breezes, in the twentieth. This analysis of how environmental conditions, knowledge systems, social relations, politics, and economics shaped scientific and popular understandings of climate contributes to recent studies on the cultural construction of climate. The approach also offers important lessons for present-day discussions of climate change, which often depict climate too narrowly as simply temperature.

**Source:** <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/661268>

### Resource Description

#### Communication: ☒

resource focus on research or methods on how to communicate or frame issues on climate change; surveys of attitudes, knowledge, beliefs about climate change

A focus of content

#### Communication Audience: ☒

audience to whom the resource is directed

Public

#### Exposure : ☒

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Unspecified Exposure

#### Geographic Feature: ☒

resource focuses on specific type of geography

# Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

Tropical

**Geographic Location:** 

resource focuses on specific location

Non-United States

**Non-United States:** Non-U.S. North America

**Health Impact:** 

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

General Health Impact

**Resource Type:** 

format or standard characteristic of resource

Research Article

**Timescale:** 

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified